

BELLERIVE ACRES NEWSLETTER

City of Bellerive, Missouri

May 2016

No. 2016.1

Ann Knapp, Mayor
Mike Jones, Alderman
Tom Kiely, Alderman
James D. Kirtland, Alderman
William (Bill) McCrary, Alderman

Stacey Fields, City Clerk
314-932-3196
sfields@cityofnormandy.gov
Nancy Hartman, Newsletter Editor
314-381-8893 nancyhartman2@charter.net



May 26 Trustee Meeting has been canceled! Next meeting is June 23. (See Mayor's article.)

From the Mayor

By Ann Knapp, Mayor
Cell- 314-607-2762
E-mail- aknapp1@yahoo.com

Hello Neighbors,
I am so excited to have the newsletter back!! I want to thank NANCY HARTMAN for getting us organized. She has offered to edit, organize, write and seek articles!! Thank you NANCY!

Prop U. Recently the residents approved Prop U. This will enable us to lower residential utility taxes and increase commercial. In 2015 our income was cut drastically and hard decisions had to be made. With our increased income we will be able to fund city projects, maintenance, street repair and also additional security as needed.

Should Bellerive Acres have an Entrance Gate?

At our next board meeting, June 23, we will be discussing a possible gate at the entrance and need your input! We will have several designs and possibilities to consider. Please try to attend! This is not a decision the Board wants to make without you! No decision will be made that night.

Why BA Needs a City Administrator

There have been concerns as to why we have a City Administrator for a city our size. Even though we are small we have the same responsibilities as a city the size of Chesterfield. We all have to maintain liability insurance, workman's comp,

liaison with the state, the county, accountant, city attorney, contractors, to mention only a few. Our Administrator secures all bids and pricing for equipment purchased, secures all bids for large projects, negotiates contracts, attends meetings on the city's behalf and takes care of any unforeseen issues the city may face. If I receive a phone call regarding any of the above it is referred to our City Administrator.

Municipal League Award

We have cancelled our May meeting due to a conflict with the Municipal League ceremony that will give three of our residents a much-deserved Citizen Engagement Award! Our proud recipients are Michelle Jones, Connie Bachmann and Don Morice. They were nominated by our City Clerk Stacey Fields for their hard work in organizing and orchestrating our 75th Anniversary Dinner and Dance and all the extras that went with it! I know it was appreciated by all of us.

I am looking forward to a great year! I am always available by phone and e-mail. Please do not hesitate.

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From the City Administrator's Desk

By Matt Lauer, City Administrator

Cell: 314-954-4170

colmatt131@aol.com

Inspections. Spring is here and so are exterior inspections. For those of you not familiar with this process I will explain.

We have a City Inspector who is trained in home inspections. He does a visual inspection from the street looking for housing maintenance violations. This is important to maintain everyone's property values in an older neighborhood in a challenging area. If he notices any violations you will receive a letter from the city giving you 30 days to comply or to arrange a timeline for repairs. Any questions or problems please do not hesitate to call me.

We are going to be conducting in-depth pool inspections following the code in our Ordinances. With the increase of mosquitos we feel this is important for our health and safety. I will be handling this.

Good News about Sewer Lateral Repairs



Recently I was able to negotiate for our city a contract with Tope Plumbing to have zero out-of-pocket homeowner cost for most sewer lateral repairs. In the past the city was only able to contribute \$750 to each homeowner toward an often very expensive repair! If you are having any sewer lateral issues please contact Stacey at City Hall for the proper application or contact me.

Street Repairs on June 23 Agenda

Thank you for your patience with the street repairs. We have recently hired an engineering firm to give us an overall map condition of our streets and what needs to be addressed first. This will be discussed at the June 23 board meeting. Repairs should begin this summer. I will be overseeing the progress and will keep you informed.

We now have a security camera near the main entrance. This was installed early this year. It

records video 24 hours a day and stores it for 30 days. The camera has already been used by the Police Department in several investigations. The camera is being maintained by Justin Kolker and Mike Jones, our IT Specialists!

If you have any questions, problems or just want to chat please reach out to me anytime.

Bellerive Acres Community Association (BACA) is a group of residents who get together to know our neighbors and have FUN. PLEASE come to one of our gatherings and get to know us. WE will be better with YOU! Just show up at a meeting or call our City Clerk.

*Next event: **June Night, 6/18**, adult dinner party.
Watch for your flier for details.*

Bellerive Website Receives National Recognition

By Justin Kolker, Webmaster

Following a very long series of forms, validations and procedures, the City of Bellerive Acres was officially granted a .GOV domain. The .GOV is the last part of a URL called the top level domain. Typically websites end in a .COM or .NET or even a .ORG. The .GOV domain is special, as it was reserved by the US government which kept the domain for its purposes. Any government organization, school, branch, state or city can apply for one of these domains.

When you see a .GOV as the last part of the domain, you can rest assured that the website you are visiting has been registered with the US government and is most likely not an imposter site. In addition to keeping www.belleriveacres.com as its website, the URL www.belleriveacresmo.gov is now live and will be phased to be the primary city website. It is important that we do everything in our power to ensure that when people visit our site, they know they are at the right place for our wonderful community.

Police Department Update

By the Men and Women of the Normandy Police Department and Chief Frank A. Mininni

NORMANDY POLICE CONTACT NUMBERS

Emergency—911

Dispatch—427-8000

Normandy Police Department—385-3300, "1" for the police department.

Tips Line—385-3300 extension 3099

City of Normandy website—
www.cityofnormandy.gov (links to the Police Department are provided on the site)

Normandy Police Department Facebook and Twitter Pages.

Greetings Bellerive Acres Residents,

As we move into the summer months, I would like to remind you that typically the summer is when crime and anti-social behavior in our neighborhoods tends to peak.

This newsletter is a perfect venue for your police department to provide tips and valuable information to you, our citizen partners. It is also a regular reaffirmation of this police department's commitment to provide you with the best service possible for your community.

Summer has traditionally been a time when citizens enjoy good weather, longer daylight hours, a robust summer activity schedule and increased time together as family. Our children are temporarily released from their educational responsibilities and as such, have more time on their hands. While we are grateful for the opportunities for vacations and other organized activities with our youth, we must also be cognizant that the unstructured time for our children

provides an opportunity to get involved with anti-social behavior, particularly property crime.

API: Designed by Normandy for Our Community

Recognizing this, your police department employs a community oriented and problem-solving program called the Area Policing Initiative, or API.

Conceived in 2010, it is a plan I created to foster a shared commitment to improving the quality of life of the citizenry. The plan embeds police officers in neighborhoods and mandates that those officers be individually committed to crime reduction, order maintenance and being an ambassador to the citizens of the community.

API is centered on the SARA model of policing: Scanning, Analyzing, Responding, Assessing. To summarize these concepts: find the concern, analyze the problem (and formulate a response plan), implement that response plan, and finally, assess how well the response worked.

Crime reduction is a community effort, but I firmly believe that the community has the reasonable expectation that its police department must lead the way. The police department leadership of all levels is committed to this and has regular briefings to share information and address areas of concern. Information is also passed up and down the chain of command through our daily roll calls, which mandate the use of the API concepts. Our officers engage in a policing technique called directed patrol, which mandates the complete patrol of each street in an officer's sector many times during the day or night.

We Can Help Ourselves Be Safe

Citizens can also use a modified SARA model for themselves:

Safety/Security—Maintain your safety edge by maintaining your property. Alarms for your house and vehicle are great deterrents to those with theft in mind, especially in the summer when families will be on vacation.

Awareness—Know what is going on around you and the neighborhood. Know whom your children are spending time with, and make sure you

approve, and that your children know why you approve or disapprove. Be aware of crime trends by engaging with your neighborhood officers.

Reporting—Community Oriented Policing cannot be done without the community part. We at the police department need you to report **ALL** suspicious or criminal behavior. We thoroughly understand the need to be anonymous and while we applaud those who take a stand for their neighborhoods without fear, we recognize that there are those whose voices are not so loud but still very important to listen to. Provided at the top of this article are important contact numbers.

Actively Engage Your Government—All facets of government should work for you and it is imperative that you stay involved with it. Attend monthly council meetings where there is always an opportunity to be heard by your elected and appointed officials. Get involved in your neighborhood by starting a neighborhood watch program and meet with those embedded police officers to share information and devise strategies to positively deal with neighborhood concerns.

How Are We Doing for You?

As mentioned before, the police department must assess how well it is doing within the community. Another program we have instituted is the mandatory Citizen Contact Program. Our officers are required to make at least two positive, proactive contacts with the citizens of Normandy and its partnering communities. This approach allows a positive interaction between officer and citizen to build trust and communication. As part of this program, officers are required to give citizens a contact assessment form that allows the police department leadership to gauge our level of service. The form comes with a self-addressed stamped envelope so the citizen incurs no expense and although the responses can be completely confidential, we hope that citizens use the opportunity for us to continue to build the twin bridges of trust and communication by providing their contact information so we can personally extend our appreciation for their participation.

In closing, I want to convey to all citizens, business owners and other interested parties that nationally and locally, crime rates are in a holding pattern after years of decline, particularly here in Normandy and the communities we serve. Unfortunately in many of the communities that surround us this is not the case. The ability to keep crime rates lower than average is due, in part, to the partnerships we have built and strive to maintain and, in no small part, to the dedication and professionalism of the police officers whom I am honored to lead.

Normandy Police Department: Fully State Accredited since 2015

These traits of partnership and professionalism have proven themselves especially in our goal of reaching state certification: provisional certification in October of 2014 and full department certification in October of 2015. This certification is an outward manifestation and recognition of elite police best practices and a bold admonition to those who would seek to negatively impact the community. These crime reduction efforts and successes have led businesses to want to invest in our future and other communities to either adopt our practices or consider partnering with the police department to share in the successes. Please consult the 2015 Annual Crime Report found on the police department's website for more on our successes and endeavors.

Best wishes to you and your families during this summer of 2016!

HEY!

- We want your feedback, questions, suggestions for articles, and article writers.
- We want your email address so we can send you stuff like this newsletter.

Send to:

nancyhartman2@charter.net or
aknapp1@yahoo.com

THE “BIRD SANCTUARY” – A TREASURE AROUND US

ITS NATURAL FEATURES

By Tom Hohenstein, Resident

When in 1924, the original owners of what is now Bellerive Acres, John D. Furstenberg and his wife (sorry, the records don't name her) submitted the plat for Bellerive Acres, they reserved for themselves the approximately 22 acres of unbuildable forested slopes along the northern and western edges of the platted lots. Many years later, in the early 50's I believe, their descendants conveyed this land to the Village of Bellerive forever as a “bird sanctuary”, and it still carries that name on St. Louis County maps. This is the first of three brief articles on the bird sanctuary, with focus on its natural features. Have you been there?

The sanctuary is densely wooded. While there remain a significant number of large century oaks and other older trees throughout the sanctuary, the sanctuary is now, unfortunately, overgrown with invasive bush honeysuckle and, to a lesser extent, wild grape vines (the subject of a future article). Many typical kinds of urban wildlife (and some not so typical) call it home (also the subject of a future article).

The sanctuary is defined by two creeks. Both creeks flow over bedrock and gravel, so the water runs clear. One meanders along the western side of the village and is fed primarily by adjacent storm sewers which directly feed into the creek and runoff from the surrounding terrain. Although an intermittent stream, there are always pools of standing water. The other creek runs along the northeast border, is wider and runs continuously—even during extended dry spells. It enters the sanctuary from “under” UMSL through a large subsurface pipe. I have always wondered if it is fed in part by an underground spring. Though fed, in part, by urban run-off the water quality in both streams is good enough to support fish and other aquatic life. Where the creek enters from UMSL, we have concrete walls and abutments. One encases an MSD sewer line and acts as a dam –

with a deep pool behind it. Adjacent is the remnants of a steel truss bridge which at one time led to several out buildings (parts of which are still present) where, as the story goes, horses were once stabled. The stream then winds 200 yards or so to the “waterfall”, where the water passes over a rock ledge and drops a couple feet or so into a clear pool, perhaps three feet deep. From there it joins the other creek and passes out of the village, runs between UMSL and Express Scripts and then along South Florissant Road (yes, it is the same creek which passes in front of Schnucks). It finally joins Maline Creek at Paul Avenue in Ferguson.

There is no public access point to the bird sanctuary and it can be difficult – but not impossible—to access it from the lots which abut it. There is, however, an infrequently-maintained service road which runs north and south along the western section from “Floyd's shed” (accessible from North Hanley at the end of Katherine Ave.) to just south of the Metrolink viaduct near Express Scripts (accessible from Geiger Road). There are no other trails or roads through the sanctuary other than a well-worn path from the service road which passes over the western creek to the “waterfall”, and the ones I clear from time to time. From there you can access both creeks, and it is actually quite simple to walk along the bedrock of the larger creek to its source.

Hope you take the time to stop in and enjoy this treasure next door!

(In my next article I will focus on the wide array of wildlife I have seen, including those not so typical. In my third article I will look at the greatest threat to the sanctuary—invasive bush honeysuckle.)

Editor's note: Tom Hohenstein has been working on his own for years to spread the word about the threats to our bird sanctuary as well as removing some honeysuckle and other destructive plants. Our city is currently seeking funds for larger scale honeysuckle removal. Get more information at www.stophoneysuckle.org. Meanwhile, if you would like to join Tom (I have) please give one of us a holler. —NH

THE END

Watch for our next newsletter, No. 2016.2, date TBA.